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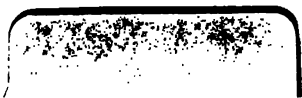
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VOICES OF LIFE,

BY

EMILY PIERPONT DE LESDERNIER.

PARIS,

PRINTED BY E. BRIÈRE,

257, RUE SAINT-HONORÉ.

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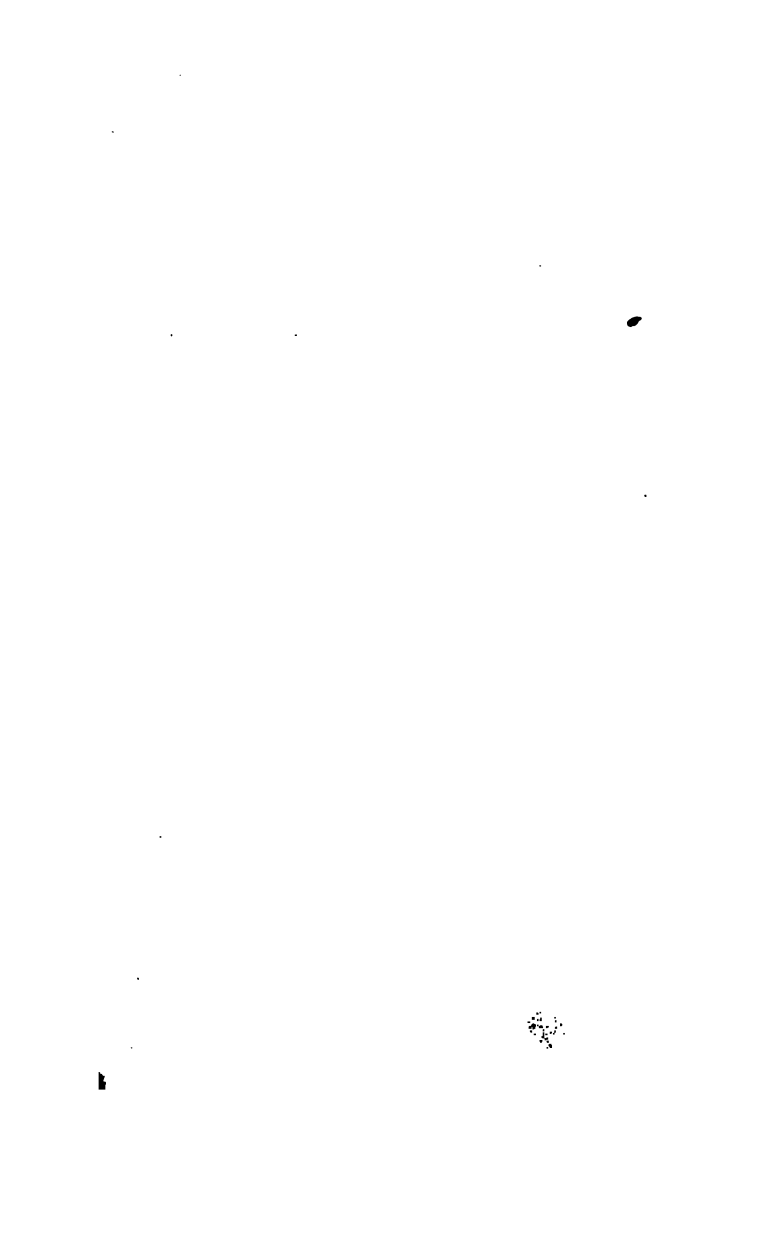
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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

1899

Beloved friends, mere words of thanks to speak
Were utterance, oh, how cold, and void, and weak,
Of the full heart on whose corroding pain
Your goodness falls in blessings like the rain;
And poesy can offer no fit token
From her deep stores. Her symphony is broken.

I can but pray that in the mortal strife,
When pale lips panting, "Sanctuary" cry
And helplessly unto the God of life
Ascends the failing spirits, anguished sigh,
That gracious comfort may on you be shed,
Which you have poured upon the mourner's head.



VOICES OF LIFE.

SPIRIT WHISPERS.

Hours of loneliness unnumbered,
Mine decreed, the Fates have sealed,
While to eyes that never slumbered,
Stands the naked soul revealed.

Here are none to soothe my anguish,
None to count the sighs I heave :
Thus on Time's gray shores I languish,
And o'er ~~and~~ ^{sad} memorials grieve.

Through the silent, dusky doorway
Creeping phantoms, one by one,
Stealing in, in ghostly array,
Flit around my chill hearth stone.

Mingling their sepulchral whispers,
Taunt me with the wasted hours,
With them come two tiny lispers
In their pale hands clasping flowers.

These, they strive to weave in garlands,
For the mourner's throbbing brow ;
But the blossoms plucked in far-lands,
Earth-airs quickly wither now —

And they fall as dead as ashes,
On the stone my tears have worn ;
So, the wretched human dashes
Hopes, that e'en of Heaven are born.

Hopes with gleams of consolation,
Flickering through the sombre gloom,
Through the brooding desolation,
Show the dwellers of the tomb.

Haunting faces dimly shaded,
With long tresses, golden hued,
Earnest eyes that early faded,
Quenched in death, with tears bedewed—



Glancing fond with tenderest meaning,
Beckon me with them to go ;
And on spirit-bosoms leaning,
Sleep from every sense of woe.

In the cold realms of obstruction ,
Fold the careless hands from toil,
Let the spheres reel to destruction,
Quit the warfare, spurn the spoil.

Lift the veil that shrouds the Isis ,
Grasp the mystery, 'tis thine ;
All that is, must be, and right is,
Clasp the cup and drain the wine.

In that deep oblivious quiet,
Dreamless years shall onward roll,
Cycling ages vainly riot,
O'er thy still unconscious soul.

“Sleep—forget—thy cares are banished,
With the close of life's dull lore.”
Slowly, then the phantoms vanished
Vanished through the dusky door.

Yes, they have the truth outspoken !
Time is palsy-struck with age ;
My life's golden bowl is broken,
Blot my name from off the page.

THE INCONSTANT.

Oh! it availeth nought; I build in vain,
Upon thy fickle heart affection's fire,
Which wavering turns, warbling the old refrain,
With a fresh pleasure to the newest lyre;
Like Heathen Worshippers at Paynim shrines,
Invoking rapture's trance from duplicate Divines.

You give, and give, and give again,
What has so oft been pledged before,
Few drops of constancy remain
To wash away the perjured stain—
So sleep on folly's Circæan shore;
I will not clash the magic chain,
That holds thy slavish heart in thrall—
No; let the wild dividing main
Pile deep and dark, its sounding wall,
With bitter waves that rise and fall
'Mid shock and din, and peaceless wail,
With thousand murmurs on the gale;
Thou wilt not hear the maddened cry,
Thou'lt ne'er detect the true heart's sigh
Lapped in thy dreams of luxury.

Thy dull ear's sealed to passion's moan,
Thy heart is ice, thy breast is stone;
I've knelt before the soulless bars,
I've watched for thee through nights of stars,

I've wept and prayed, and hoped and feared,
Believed—been duped, receded, neared,
Love's panoply in patience worn;
It's last device is soiled and torn:
I fling the tattered remnants down,
Defiant of thy faithless frown,
And hold myself in utter scorn,
And loathing, that my faith was given,
That e'er my trusting heart has borne
That image—false to me and Heaven.

ONE YEAR AGO.

One year ago the Autumn winds were wailing,
But I was sheltered from their bleak assault;
One year ago, the harvest moon was sailing—
With tearless eyes I searched the starry vault.

I watched the moon and heard the wind's low chanting,
Listened for steps upon the threshold stone;
But when *he* came, my heart with rapture panting,
Blessed Heaven for him; I was no more alone.

The bare Elm rattling at the window pane,
The dull owl hooting from her lonesome nest,
Like mournful omens clustering round the fane,
Where kept love, hope, and joy their regal rest.

I heeded not, wrapt in a dream of bliss,
Low on a bed of withered roses sleeping,
His voice was there, Nepenthe-like, his kiss
Soothed every sense, while love's glad gala keeping.

One year ago ! again the leaves are scattered —
Again the ghostly Elm raps at the pane ;
The owl more fiercely screams, her nest is shattered,
Beat by the stormy winds and drenching rain.

I listen now, to Nature's prophet teachings,
My poor soul's rifled of her richest lore,
The shimmering moonbeams, with their pale out-
 reachings—
Bring me no promise as they did of yore.

TWO EPISODES IN A LIFE.

The black and shattered rafters shook,
In the wrath of the midnight storm :
And a freezing breath from the fireless nook,
On each whirling gust was borne :
Two sorrowful ones of misery's brood,
Cried one to the other, " We have no food !"
But the mother's voice grew weak apace,
And chill was the fold of her faint embrace.

TWO EPISODES IN A LIFE.

With the glimmer of day,
Strode the storm away,
The blast subdued its breath ;
The moan on that mother's lip was still—
She was cold in the arms of death !
And there her child in blind dismay,
Shrieked desolate words to the speechless clay !

They laid her down in the Earth's dark breast,
And many a night in her sad unrest,
The weary child the green sod prest ;
Man's pity was warm, but it brought not back
The mother's love to the orphan's track.

Years passed, as years to a young girl may,
In the world's bewildering maze,
Where flatterers seek the mind to sway,
All vowing young beauty's praise !

At last one came with spells to please,
Wiling her heart with subtle ease ;
With voice that breathed the sweetest strain,
Or tender with a pleading plain,
Till she yielded heart, soul, faith, aye all !
He gave to her a cup of gall !
'Twas bitter drinking, but she drank,
Then, helpless down in sorrow sank !

Love's passion-buds nipped in their early bloom
Their seed-light shed,

Brought poison-blight to him of swiftest doom,
And peace for ever fled !
And his life-hopes like hers, went out in gloom,
And his heart beat to death sighing for room
To pour its grief forth to the healing air,
But space denied him solace in despair !
Wide seas divide them now ;
They dwell apart,
With a slow petrification at the heart,
And vengeful ire broods in each lonely lair !
Yes, they who once were bound by every tender token,
Could live to hate—love's solemn pledges broken !

Thus was the leaf of life a blotted page,
From orphan childhood down to feeble age ;
And friendship, love or hope will never more
Greet her with smiles on that most lonely shore,
Where the gray wrecker mocks the curlew's cry,
And the stark lighthouse lifts its warning eye ;
She trims the lamp conveying hope to others,
But in her breast, the last pale glimmer smothers,
And through the darkness on the misty lea
Restless she moans to the deep answering sea.

A WISH FOR THE PAST.

Oh, sad is the heart that cannot sing
The song that it liketh best !

How wearily droops the restless wing,
Far away from its own dear nest !
For the strain it loves,
Like the pining dove's,
Falls from merry, to moaning lays,
When the stranger's ear
Is turned to hear
What the pensive soul essays.

I would sing as we sang in days of old,
When we sat by the murmuring sea,
And our voices leaped to join the stars,
In their strange wild minstrelsy.
The glimmering stars,
Thro' the silver bars,
Of Heaven, that peep and gleam,
By the mystic light,
We watched all night,
Watched the moon o'er the ocean stream ;
And our voices rolled,
As the night bell tolled,
To the quaint old words with a pathos bold.

But years since then with sweep and swirl—
'Neath the tides of time have set :
The diamonds of youth are lost in the whirl—
We hold now but porphyry and jet ;
Oh, that some diver bold and strong,
Untamed as the mighty sea,
Would bring us our jewels back again.
From the depths of that mystery,

And then we might sing, as we did of yore,
Never heeding the soulless, sullen roar,
For why should we heed, so we held once more
The gift of our youth, and its priceless store !

MEMORIES.

With the soft and stilly twilight,
Comes thine image like a dream—
Half forgotten words repeated,
Which with tender memories teem.

Dost thou mid the dim, far echoes
Of thy heart's serenest tone,
Feel that soft and gentle breathing
That once mingled with thine own ?

Does that fluttering thrill recal thee,
To the calm sweet eventide,
When one standing at the window,
There thy tardy coming spied ?

But thy step was ever welcome,
Came it late or came it soon,
And she met thy fondest fervor
With her passion—as a boon !

Are there not some mute reminders,
Hanging now upon the wall,
Which will oft your early raptures
From their lonely graves recall ?

Pale, dead memories sharply featured,
Sculptured in the ghastly fold,
While the ghosts of happier moments,
Flit and startle from the mould.

Hear'st thou not a voice inringing
With the silvery chimes that roll,
To the measure of sweet music,
And the words of one loved soul ?

Happy songs and happy songster,
That could cheer thy saddest hour—
Hushed is now the magic warbling
Mourns the alien her "lost bower."

Yet is kept one fragrant garland
Faded—withered leaves I trow ;
Once thy breath and lips caressed them,
And they bloom in her eyes now.

Smouldering embers of affection,
Heaped above the heart of fire,
Tell that there thou'rt buried, dearest,
Till its latest breath expire !

A DREAM OF HADES.

Sinning against Heaven's light,
Groping in gloom,
Our steps treading downward
Still tend to the tomb ;
There the dark larches grow,
There the black rivers flow,
Laving the willows low,
Drooping therein ;
Whose long tendrils dancing
To harp notes entrancing
In mystical echoes,
That slumberless roll,
But the lonely wave weeping,
Far onward is creeping,—
Or loathfully seeking
The Hadean goal :
Where raging in mad despair,
All the wild Furies lair,
Reading those entering there
Oracular Doom.
Mortals, new ushered in,
Shrink from the murk and din,
Grasping the mantle humanity wore ;
'Tis snatched from the clasping hands,
Naked the wan soul stands,
Unsheltered in presence of Pluto's grey hands—
Where He, the ruthless King—King of the igneous
vast—

Sits enthroned in his might,
In the gloom of that night,
Whence the smoke of tormentings forever upcast,
And he scents the hot breath
Of the undying death,
As his torturing minions complete the dark rite ;
And their flaming eyes glow,
At each horrible blow,
So unflinchingly struck at th' omnipotent foe,
For they would the princedoms of Heaven o'erthrow ;
And the huge anvil rings,
With the measureless beat,
Which that shaping woe brings,
With its memories fleet,
While the soul is submerged in the self conscious fires
'Tis mercy's ordeal, purging earthborn desires,
Till the purified spirit soars free from the clod,
And the essence divine floats away to its God.

Sinning 'gainst Heaven's light,
Groping in gloom,
Our steps treading downward,
Ever tend to the tomb ;
There the dark larches grow,
There the black rivers flow,
Laving the willows low
Drooping therein ;
Whose long tendrils dancing,
To harp notes entrancing
In mystical echoes,
That slumberless roll ;

But the lonely wave weeping,
Far onward is creeping,—
Or loathfully seeking
The Hadean goal.

CHANGE.

Change is coeval with Adam's fall,
Who exchanged, alas! for an apple, his all,
Then adopted the mask—'tis an ancient affair—
Invented at first by the primitive pair,
To hide the deep blush of transgression;
When the juice of the fruit they ventured to sip
Left an ineffaceable stain on the lip,
That made the guilty confession.

The primitive pair with their logic and leaves,
Who instead of contentedly binding their sheaves,
Strayed after forbidden pleasure—
From Eden thrust out by that act of sin,
Their bread by the sweat of their brow to win,
Seemed a change severe beyond measure.

Change! change! with its thrilling chime,
Ringing merry, or mournfully toning,
A restless theme, full of changing shocks,—
At the human breast forever knocks,
With its pealing strokes undoes the locks

CHANGE.

And reveals the phantom which coldly mocks
At our glitter, our pains and our moaning.

Change to get and change to spare,
Change to keep and change to share,
With those whose change is scarce and rare,
Who sell us their wit for money,
The miser for gold,
His bread has sold ;
He grinds the poor in his love of gain
And shuts his ear to the cry of pain ;
He knows no more of sorrow,
Than the iron machine,
When it thunders to death
The unconscious throngs that are hurled by its br
To that change which no time can borrow.

Speculators on change
Are taking free range ;
And the greedy disciples of barter
Are improving their *lent*,
At a heavy per cent,
Devouring bonds and charters :
E'en the man in the moon changes quarter !
Only to think of a man up there,
With a borrowed light and so icy a stare,
In the silver line to be taking a share,
And tipping his horns with a blinking glare,
At the elf-king as he shakes the cold mist from his

Hark ! to the dirge of tolling bells,
The sob on the mid-day air that swells
When the great and the prized are dying !
The same cold tongue, that for living worth,
Rolled the chant of praise through heaven and earth,
Now tells the mournful story,
That the archer grim has bent his bow,
And the poisoned shaft of the hourly foe,
With deadly might, has lain full low,
Some far-famed son of glory.

There is no disputing the obvious fact,
That some men are great through infinite tact,
While others are only a fizzle—
A flash in the pan, of the spark divine ;
And for those who can't bear the ambrosial wine,
It is better they quietly "mizzle."

I would not trench with unhallowed step
On the ground where the dead are sleeping ;
I would not rend with ruthless touch,
The pall a loved memory keeping ;
But I think for all the grand display,
The clarion's cry and the trumpet's bray,
The muffled drum and the bugle's tone,
And the cymbal's clash for a nation's groan,
With badge and banner low trailing,
That many a soul whom no state attends,
Has performed as well its stated ends,
As the one whom all states are bewailing.

VOICES AT THE NEGLECTED TRYST.

FIRST VOICE.

Oh ! must I wait for ever
With this deep unanswered prayer?
Ever listening for the footfall—
But in vain—it is not there !

On the winter of affection
Will the spring tide never ope ?
With its glistening buds of promise—
Dear talismans of hope.

Will the summer with its gladness,
Bring me never pleasant dreams ;
With sunshine through the forest leaves,
And the gurgling laugh of streams ?

Must autumn with its painted grief,
A mournful requiem sigh—
Must all love's raptures bright and brief
Low with the sere leaf lie ?

SECOND VOICE.

Yes—tread them down, the love, the life,
The fond and fervent heart—

Crush out the doting soul to dust
And let its fires depart !

It was a crime to lean to lips
That whispered seeming truth,
Who gives a facile faith to love,
Will find it cruel ruth !

Another wail is on the air,
All sorrowful and wild—
Another victim mourns the snare,
'Tis Love's deluded child !

Another on the burning sea
Of black despair is tossed—
Pilot, helm, beacon—all are gone !
Another soul is lost !

So fling away the faithful heart
Blot out the halcyon past—
Tread down to death the trusting one
Would to God this were the last !

FIRST VOICE.

No cry of mine will bring him more.
He heeds me not I wist ;
I bear the heavy cross alone
At the neglected tryst.

THE SNOW STORM.

Oh, the snow, the snow how it falls !
How it clings to the windows and walls
Of the houses that stand on the lea !
Triumphant it stalks o'er land and sea !
Subtle snow ! all this wild winter day,
How it blocks up the great highway !
How it shuts out the sight of the main
As it piles the huge drifts on the plain !

Oh, fearful is the gloom of night !
But more fearful far, this gloom of light—
Shrouding all things in white,—
Borne on the blast in its wavering might !
And it murmurs and moans in its sad weird race !
But through all the gloom, dear, I see thy loved face,—
Full of freshness and bloom, beaming gladness and
grace.

To the chilling terror I whisper of thee—
Though the white rude storm, it is true, my beloved,
Does separate thee and me ;
But the night, the dead night
Palls the scene from my sight !

All through the blank dark, tortured spirits are
calling,
While myriads of snow flakes still earthward are
falling :

But the bright blushing dawn, the bleak night will
outrun,
Glad we'll hail, on the morrow, the light of the sun !

Then I looked on the dreary, turbulent main,
With its hollow fret, and reverberant strain—
Where the foam crests break on the rock bound shore,
And recklessly dash evermore, evermore !
The storm fiend had mirrored his fierce scowl there,
And set on the waves the dark seal of despair !
In that fateful hour it seemed to me
That the King of the Wind, and the Queen of the Sea,
A Tryst did keep in the murky night—
And the lover's on fire with fond delight,
As he sinks in the heat of passion's pride,
Down, down, with his white breasted white armed
bride
To their soft moss couch 'neath the Ocean's tide ;
Then the awful *Harp* of the mighty God,
With its ringing, terrible sounding chord,
Rolled a pœan of mournful hymning—
That masterless harp wailed low and deep,
As *Eolus* sank with the Sea Queen to sleep.
Then I thought of the drowning mariner's cry,
As his life bubbled out—to the great wide sky ;
And in fancy I saw a floating form,
Surging up to the shore in the lull of the storm.

A LEGEND OF THE MINES.

A traveller from a far off land,
In search of gain to the golden strand
Of Calia came, where the famous bands,
Of miners sift the golden sands ;
Digging and delving under the mould,
Peering deep for the yellow gold.

Many were there with feverish dreams
Of dragging up from the countless streams,
The lustrous spirit which ever seems
Like a false god's smile,—with its subtle beams,
Deep in the gulches, and under the mould,
Luring the searcher after the gold.

On a mountain's brow in the waning light,
The traveller paused with well pleased sight,
“Prospecting” the ground before the night
Should settle down with its glooming might,
And fall like a veil 'twixt the miner's toil,
And the face of his idol under the soil.

And the web of the sleeper's dream was strewed
With golden flowers in a golden road—
With a golden scythe he cut the gowd,
And bathed where the pure Pactolean flowed ;
And then he washed from the yellow tide,
Gold enough to send for his bride !

But here a voice at his cabin door,
Drifted the happy dream to the shore ;
And to real life he woke once more ;
And sighed as he murmured o'er and o'er,
Deep in the gulches and under the mould,
I must delve and search for the flashing gold !

The traveller rose at the dawn of day,
And swept the bright curls from his brow away,
For he, too, as on the rock he lay,
Had a vision of woman's entrancing sway ;
But he woke to pursue, wilful and strong,
The mania fierce of the miner throng.

Not in the surface claims he plied,
But sharply he drilled in the mountain's side,
Where the sparkling quartz with its shining pride,
Told a tale of the boundless wealth inside,
And delving and drilling with pick and bore,
He tunnelled a path to the bright-eyed ore.

Thus dimly he wrestled along the track,
And never his soul did fear or slack,
For home-thoughts and love-dreams no more came
back ;
But his mind forever was on the rack,
To clutch and sever, and mass the gold,
Bedded so pure in its crystal fold !

Among the workers, a whisper ran,
That fearfully pointed at the man,

For he grew to ignore the human clan,
And the human on him had fixed a ban,
For strangely when hovered the thick winged night.
He wandered alone to the quartz claim height.

There underneath the pregnant hill,
Where the virgin gold was forming still,
With his peerless treasure he tarried at will,
And the clang of labor rang terse and shrill,
As delving and drilling with pick and bore,
He tunnelled a path to the bright-eyed ore.

But the word went forth, that unhallowed rays,
Lighting the cavern met his gaze,
Of thrilling whisperings thro' the maze,
And flickering gleams in the labyrinth ways,
And a spirit-maid with sunlight hair,
That beckoned him on to her golden lair.

And he worshipping, listened the magic words,
For she promised him gold in uncounted hoards;
And he loved the maid, and he worshipped the gold,
And he followed her steps with a step as bold,
Till he felt the heart of the mountain beat,
And he saw where the veins and arteries meet.

And he knew he had wounded a living thing,
And he sought to flee from the mortal sting
Which the vengeful spirit hurled at his soul;
But never more to the human goal,

Might he backward turn ! While ages roll,
Sweet memories' bells will echoless toll.

'Neath the heart of the mountain,
Where many a fountain,
And silvery river are dashing unseen ;
There where the waters are rushing and flushing,
The gold-seeker sleeps in a Lethean dream,
Unwaked by the glories that over him gleam ;
And the golden veins for ever are gushing,
Hidden deep in the precious sands,
That never are reached by the miner's hands ;
But many a thought
On his brow is wrought,
As digging and delving under the mould,
He peers so deep for the yellow gold.

LITTLE FOOTPRINTS.

From my home some weeks a ranger,
Stayed by adverse wind and tide—
Frequent dreams of threatened danger—
Menaced my pet darling Ide.

Oft my heart with tenderest longing—
Yearned to clasp its hope and pride,

But strange, busy matters thronging—
Kept me from my nursling's side.

Days went by, and weeks were ended,
Palpitating anxious fears,
Swift I sped me, phantom tended,
To the home, her sweet voice cheers.

Up the elm-tree walk I wended,
Glancing anxiously around ;
But no sign of her was blended,
With the landscape's well known bound.

Then at last down looking sadly,
That I heard her, saw her not,
My eye lighted on a land-mark,
Close beside our rustic cot.

Mother's heart and bosom throbbing,
With a faint, extatic sobbing,
Down I sank, beside the lilies
Weeping in my happiest way,
O'er a tiny little footprint
Fresh and recent in the clay,
Where for pastime she had dabbled,
Doubtless all the livelong day :
Leaving there that darling token,
Which so rapturously had spoken—
"She is well enough to play."

MISGIVINGS.

We shrink from the lonely desert track,
As we bid sweet home adieu ;
And the deep tear starts, and the heart turns back
With farewells to the loved and true.

But the gaoler strength, bids the tear to its cell,
Tho' the quivering heart be torn ;
And the loved ones whisper—"All will be well"—
"Far beyond the distant bourne."

And thus we go on our fateful ways
To oblivion's tidal surge ;
'Mid happier dreams of other days—
Still chanting pale memory's dirge.

From their minds, who it seems will never forget,
We shall fade like myths of the past ;
And hoary Old Time with his sharp sickle set,
Cuts us out of our friendships at last.

What wonder we shrink from the desert track,
As we bid sweet home adieu ;
Not sure there'll be one to welcome us back
Not sure those we love will be true !

THE IRON STEED

Hark! hark! to the neigh of the Iron Steed,
As he thunders along thro' the pleasant mead;
He stays not to taste where the herbage gleams,
But he sucks the life of the limpid streams
To quench the thirst in his parching throat;
On each shining drop he seems to gloat,
And on, on, on! 'Tis a fearful sight
To see him plunge in blind, mad might,
Clashing on through the winding way,
While vapory wings from his shoulders float,
And rise and stretch in devious play—
The last faint tip of the feathery curls
You can scarce descry till a new unfurls.
Now thro' the bridge we clatter away—
And now we are over the river;
A circling bend and a heaving sway,
We glance down the chasm, and shiver,
But on we fly with lightning speed,
Of his fiery entrails born,
Little he recks and nought will heed,
When life's fond ties are torn.
Staunch, fearless and strong he thunders along,
Burthened with priceless treasure;
Ah! the life of one as the life of all,
Is dear in countless measure.
Unheeding we rest, lulled on danger's breast,
While the hope of speed continues,

And millions of souls, as the swift year rolls,
Trust their live to Iron sinews.
But woe, woe, woe, if in the mad run,
We stumble or crack but a link.
The coil is undone, the last thread is spun,
In Eternity's Ocean we sink.
Yet hark to the neigh of the Iron Steed,
As he thunders on thro' the pleasant mead,
He stays not to taste where the herbage gleams,
But he sucks the life of the limpid streams
To quench the thirst in his burning throat,
On each shining drop he seems to gloat :
And the giant trees are his only food,
They fall 'neath the axe, like wheat 'neath the sickle,
While the sweat from the woodman's brow must
trickle,
As he cleaves the rough bole with busy mood.
But the Iron horse hies, under bending skies—
Now threading a tunnel's darksome maze,
Fear not, one hand still guides thee ;
One yet that numbereth all thy days ;
Omniscient arms enfold ye ;—
Now through the city, now through the town,
Ever onward we proudly are dashing,
Now 'twixt cleft rocks, now up, now down,
It would seem that the furies were lashing.
Jars the sharp grail,
That's danger's trail !
Ah ! the horrible crash and 'wildering cry—
Are mingled together most fearfully—
And then nought but groans and confusion.
The Iron horse power too strong, or too weak

Has proven our trust but delusion.
Here lie the dead and the mangled forms,
But a moment ago warm life nourished,
Alas ! for the heart that is left to mourn
Its Idol too suddenly perished ;
Not an instant of time was snatched to tell
Of the gasping wish for a last farewell ;
Death, hovering darts on his helpless prey,
And our dearest hopes are but crumbling clay ;
Here lies the steam horse a wasted wreck,
Of the hot and fiery spirit.
Ye sought with useless rein to check,
When powers above ye steer it—
For a Titan fate, with unerring blow,
The mace doth hurl that lays us low !

MAKE ME THINE.

Why beats the heart forever that one prayer ?
Dost thou e'er dream of all that I would tell ?
Inspired to utterance the bliss I dare
Swells like a tide ; I wish for thee 'twere well
To make me thine !

For both are lonely, and yet both are brave
To face a world of barrenness and toil,

Why should you also be cold custom's slave ?

My unanointed brow craves holy oil,
To crown me thine !

When copse and field and sedge are all aglow

With the glad flutter of the mating birds,
To solitude, with pensive pace I go,
Recalling the low tones, the honied words,
That proved thee mine !

The wild Hymettus bees flit humming by

Laden with sweets sipped from the souls of flowers,
But loftier themes engage thy fervent eye,
With grand majestic thoughts sublimer powers
That hold me thine !

Thou magnet of my heart! If I too near

Approach the sacred fire that guards thy fame,
Thou wilt but smile benignant on the tear,
Pearled at thy feet, nor the chaste memories blame,
That keep me thine !

Yes, thine in spite of ban, or ward or cross,

Thy Roman Faith may shut its jarring gates—

My tameless ardor bridges o'er the fosse

Humbly imploring the diviner fates,
To make me thine !

WRECK OF THE SAN FRANCISCO,

OR,

PERILS ON THE DEEP.

Morn after morn the waiting ship had lain,
Rocked on the fair arm of the heaving main,
As loth to quit that calm caressing hour,
To tempt the fickle sea's relent'less power—
But now—the pilot takes his wary stand,
The booming farewell gun salutes the land,
As she, with one proud bound of conscious might,
Looses her sails and wheels into the night.

And on she sweeps, enormous in her bulk,
Strong bands of iron clasp her massive hulk,
Stately and sure, she tracks her outward way,
The dallying winds with the white canvas play;
She seeks that bourne, the Ocean limits mark
And hails the morning sun, that set in polar dark.

The tropic day refulgent sinks to rest,
And plants his banner in the blushing west,
Neptune recumbent on his sea-bed sleeps;
And his grey tresses in the blue wave steeps.
Surrounded by her train so fair and fell,
The regal Darkness tolls her midnight knell;

Up springs the dreadful harpist of the north,
And as his fearful thunders issue forth,
The hoary Neptune from his slumber wakes,
And jarring discord his dread trident shakes,
The hollow winds with vibratory swells,
Rise wild commotion in the yawning hells,
The reckless seas with raging fury bare,
The sturdy sailor's practiced soul to scare.
The creaking ship bends shivering to the blast;
Her sails in tatters hang, and reels her mast,
Until with rending crash it toppling falls,
And pitches flashing through the watery walls.

Darkness still holds her empire o'er the main,
The furies still link time's eventful chain.
Again the yelling winds sweep the black sky,
Again the seas in wrathfulness reply,
Rousing from troubled dreams those trembling souls,
To list the tocsin which the tempest rolls.
From a huge pile, a mountain wave descends,
Toward the devoted ship it angry bends,
Strikes madly on her quarter, sweeps her deck,
And ruthless hurls from off the rolling wreck,
The helpless numbers who with life's last grasp
Clutch wildly the frail hopes mocking their clasp.
And many choking, gurgling voices send,
A cry for help, no human hand may lend!
One thrilling shriek of horror and despair,
Above the storm, pierces the darkling air,
Then on the ear a fearful silence crept;
Hush! — List, the Requiem by the wind — god wept.

Yet the staunch hull, some fainting hope sustains :
We may outride the storm's insatiate claims.
From the beleaguered ship rose earnest prayer :
" Deliverance Lord ! we claim our Father's care."—
A ray of sunlight shot athwart the prow,
Kissed the rough sea, and calmed its frantic brow ;
A sail or two in the far distance shone—
Faded from view, and left us still alone—
So, there she lay—quivering in every joint,
Crippled, convulsed, shattered each salient point ;—
" The ship's a leak ! To man the pumps all hands !"
The captain's voice cheers on the toiling bands ;
Perchance sweet life shall be their labour's meed,
With superhuman power the pulses plead.
The day declined—the brooding tempest roared—
And the stern waves their wasteful thunders poured.
A fearful hour went by—a sail appears,
Their plight discerns ; the sinking hull it nears,
And promise fair some speedy aid will give
A gush of joy !—they trust and trusting live ;
But in the shade of night's propitious wings,
The flattering coward all his canvas flings,
Courts the free winds to swell the snowy sails—
Where danger's front appears, the dastard quails ;
The grey dawn breaks, and wistful eyes we stretch
But find no vestige of the faithless wretch :—
So that hope passed ; another quickly springs ;
" A sail !—a ship !" The glad response it rings,—
The master seaman in sharp peril's power,
Proves himself equal to the trying hour,
He called his crew, with clarion voice upraised,
Commended all their acts, their courage praised :—

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The master seaman in sharp peril's power,
Proves himself equal to the trying hour,
He called his crew, with clarion voice upraised,
Commended all their acts, their courage praised :—

"No more your wishes, or your will restrain,
"I leave you free to go, or to remain;
"*There* rides the ship may bear you safely o'er,
"*Here* the disabled hulk and shortened store,
"A hope almost forlorn to leave, or bide
"By this torn flag whatever ills betide."

Then, each brave hand was laid on each true heart,
And their determined eyes towards Heaven they dart,
Nor needed words to tell the prompt intent,
To stand by him, till life's last spark be spent.
But there were feeble ones who claimed our care
For timely refuge gladly they prepare.
Quick disembarking from the tattered wreck,
Mothers and babes welcome the friendly deck;
Nor were these eager transportations stayed
Till darkness wrapped them in impervious shade.
Thro' the deep night, the bellowing winds resound,
We in the morn no haven of safety found!
The severing seas had formed a murky wall,
And the safe bark was gone beyond recall!
Then heartsick—baffled and in dreary mood,
We sat us down in dark despair to brood,
A melancholy hopelessness oppressed,
Crushing the curdling life in every breast,—
Alone—amid the boundless waste—alone—
No rescuing beacon on our dim eyes shone.
Six days we'd lain environed with ills,
And now new horror stalks with terror-chills;
 old, hunger and pale fear, their scourges lent,
But now the pestilence an agent sent,
To press the cup all brimming to the lip,
And force us there the desperate drops to sip.

Grappling for life, strong men in anguish died,
While infants clung to their dead mothers' side ;
With playful hands the chilling breast embayed,
The tender lips sweet nourishment essayed ;
But cold, unanswering to warm nature's plea
Death touched those infants—and they ceased to be.
But oh! Our God a new deliverance brings :
Before our famished sight a succour springs,
A light ! dear omen, threw its slanting rays
As boomed the signal gun thro' the dank haze !
And lo! a ship looms on the horizon, clear,
Once more we bade adieu to pallid fear :
And watched her riding trimly down the gale,
Dashing the spray along the watery vale.

* * * * *

Backward we gazed upon the mournful wreck,
As the last man, our captain—left the deck.
And pondered on the record dark and sore—
A great experience from her breast we bore—
We left her there—stretched at full length alone
Like the dead body when the spirit's flown !—
Slowly she sank, bearing to their deep tomb,
The lifeless forms, left huddled in her womb.—
The warm sun blazes from his Orient throne,
The sparkling ocean smiled from zone to zone,
A great beneficence in his right hand
Holds all the winds—and we shall reach the land.

A MONODY.

As the wind moans, so moan I ;
List to it wailing murmuring by ;
It tells of high hopes crost ;
Of hearts unreconciled,
Affections aged to frost—
Of souls, to sin beguiled !

It wanders lonely as I—
List to it ! wailing, murmuring by ;
The plaint of the fitful thing,
Is answered in wearisome groans.
The touch of a viewless wing,
Draws the breath of my heart in moans.

Where was a bower of roses—
The cypress nods to-day ;
Where was a stately pleasance—
Pale, sighing willows sway.

All the familiar landmarks
Are lost on the lea—
All the ancient moorings
Are swept by the sea.

The ice-clad boughs are rattling drearily,
Throughout the murky night,
Lifting their wintry bareness to the air—
They lash the quivering light.
Ye are companions to my curdling heart,
Ye weird and cerie forms,
This shivering heart no sympathy endures,
But from the blast of storms!

The flowers are in their graves,
Not dead but sleeping;
Above, the tempest raves,
Solemnly weeping.
These slumbering germs, may re-awakened glow,
In pure and loveliest hues,
When spring's soft fresh'ning zephyrs gently blow,
And gushing life ensues.

My blighted blossoms will revive no more,
On hill, in dale, or wold,
For nature's cunning never can restore,
The fair but perished mould;
And I must live bereaved
The bleakness of my desolation wear;
Nothing can be retrieved;
Sob on ye mighty winds
My griefs ye strengthen me to bear.

WE MEET AS STRANGERS NOW

We meet as strangers now,
We who were fond and leal,
There's coldness on thy brow,
And on my lips, a seal.

The cherished dream of yore,
Life's real must efface,—
O never, never more
The sweet memorials trace!

Alas! the broken vow!
The shadows never flit:
We meet as strangers now,
The lamp of love unlit.

We'll meet as strangers still,
Forgetful of the past—
Thy coldness cannot kill,
And Hope shall hold me fast.

VOICES OF THE SEA.

VOICES OF THE SEA.

Hear the voices of the sea,
Changing sea!
What vast deeps of tirelessness its constant beat
foretell;
How it murmurs, murmurs, murmurs,
Through the long and murky night!
While the stars are draped in dimness
This old ocean in this grimness,
Ceaseless rolls.

With the surgings of the sea,
Hark! a voice—
What a tale of hopelessness that wild beseeching tell
Now 'tis wailing, wailing, wailing
To the deaf sea's maddening roar—
While the stars are draped in dimness
This old ocean in its grimness,
Ceaseless rolls.

Standing here upon the beach—
Watching waves,
What a throb of restlessness their ebb and flow impel
Ever moaning, moaning, moaning
Like my lorn heart's dismal beat,
As the shivering waves bewailing
Fold my feet—then bound as quailing
At the touch.

Thou art faithless, oh! thou sea,
Ruthless sea,
Know'st thou aught of pity, in thy palpitating clasp,
Ever throbbing, throbbing, throbbing
To that chill death-muffled heart,
And dear head my bosom cherished—
Now from earth forever perished—
Mournful sea !

Hear the voices of the sea,
Thrilling sea !
What a depth of sorrow in that melancholy tone —
Ever sobbing, sobbing, sobbing
With its mighty power of wo,
While the stars are draped in dimness
This old ocean in his grimness,
Ceaseless rolls.

A VISION OF LIFE.

Tossing restless on my pillow, through the thickly-
visioned night,
Like a wreck upon the billow, compass lost and beacon
light,

All around me swept the Passions, threatening there
my trembling bark,
'Gainst the spectral headlands crashing—dangerous
land-marks grim and stark.

Phantom Fears, foul train of monsters, pale Revenge
with lurid eye,
Mad Ambition, siren songsters ! save me from the
'wildering cry.

Love with wooing smiles did shimmer, by a hazy
torch-light bland,
Glad I sought the pleasing glimmer, closed my arms
through rushing sand.

Frenzied Hopes amid the dashing, grasp me with their
iron might,
All these fierce things round me clashing, over-
whelmed me with affright—

Whirled me out to sink in ocean, and beneath the
turbid wave,
Crushed and helpless, without motion, deep where
storm nor wind can rave.

There, methought, an age I slumbered, in the calm
beneath the sea,
Fathoms far above me numbered myriad shapes, once
ills to me.

Then I felt a coward pleasure, creeping thro' my heart
and brain,

"I have 'scaped the bond of nature, I am free from sin
and pain."

O'er the pathless waste were fleeting, stately galleons
staunch and proud—

Vibrant din, perpetual beating, hiss of fire and smoke-
wreathed shroud.

And my spirit caught in glimpses, dreams of rest from
human toil,

When tried souls find light to grow in, fed by learn-
ing's sacred oil.

Now from storm-heaved surface booming sounds of
wo and blank dismay

Tempest-hurled, dark clouds are looming—blackest
night obscures the way.

Whirlwinds grapple with each other, like fierce foes
on battle plain,

One tall ship, and lo ! another strew their fragments
o'er the main.

Then I heard shrieks from the dying—then the gurg-
ling of the sea—

As they sank, faint motion plying, through the surges
sank to me ;

One, a youth of noble daring, sought to save his new-made bride,
In his arms his treasure bearing ;—soon they rested,
side by side.

Yester morn a chaplet wreathing, decked her brow
with rapture's hue ;
But, to-day, for her are weaving, ocean pearls and salt
sea yew.

No more struggle. Now in quiet through the coral
groves they glide—
Fate for them hath spoke the fiat, checked the pulse
of life's warm tide.

And I felt that coward pleasure through my senses
stealing in,
“I have 'scaped,” I cried, “from nature, I am free from
pain and sin.”

Then I thought, weak and inglorious, thus to shun the
upper day,
Rouse thee ! conquer ! be victorious, spurn the fetters
of delay.

Circling cycles, ever creeping, in the noiseless step of
Time,
While the dust, his mantle sweeping, buries deep the
age of crime.

The old crumbling feudal glory, toppling from its ancient rock,
Tolls the knell of antique story, as the time-worn shackles drop.

Each and all must fill the measure, heap the mound and draw the line,
'Mid the clangings of endeavor, weary mortals wail and pine.

Forge the bolt and ring the anvil, build machines to baffle pride,
Let the sage toil o'er the embers, hope and life his arts decide.

Tyrant man may find his pleasure, in his power to crush the poor,
Every groan swells on eternal, and God's justice ! it is sure.

But why rail against the masters, since the slaves contented stand,
Their *own* fire the steel must temper, that shall cut this ancient band.

Fear not then to rear your altars, and stand by them firm and true,
Glory's nursling never falters ! Tread the UPAS where it grew.

So the noxious vapors seething, bruised by press of
many feet,
Till the power from firm souls breathing, shall make
pure the poisonous heat.

In its place then, plant the olive, ever hallowed, holy
tree,
From that mountain where the pale leaves trembled
with Christ's agony.

Ye, to-day, the seed are sowing—soon shall leaves
and buds appear,
Ah! the fruit is long in growing—when 'tis ripening
thou'rt not here.

Yet thy children reap the blessing from thy life so
richly brought,
And their children onward pressing seek to wear thy
crown of thought.

From divine predestinations, which primeval lore
records,
From oblivion's outer *darkness*, ring the far prophetic
words :

“Hark! through countless generations, angel legions
marshal on,
Rolling in grand diapasons peals of joy and glory
won.”

THE VIGIL OF THE HOMELESS.

The homes! the homes! how fair they stand,
 Against the twilight sky;
The glowing tints of parting day
O'er window-panes, in gorgeous play,
 Like golden phantoms, fly.
The waving trees make music sweet,
The clinging vines, embracing, greet,
The creeping tendrils softly meet,
In the hum of the passing lay.

It has faded now—yet a holy light
 Falls 'round the trellissed bowers;
I hear the low and sweet “good night”
 From the infant buds to the flowers :
Within the homes how the faces glow
 In the fire-light's fitful shine;
Fond kindred hearts in union grow
 Where the hopes of Love entwine.

The homes! the homes! how calm they gleam
 In the hush of the midnight hours;
The souls within are dreaming now;
Rapturous sleep o'er the pallid brow
 Its hallowed mysteries showers,
Night hath tones for the dreamer's ear,
Which thrill the watching soul with fear ;

Spirits of awe are gathering near—
I know, I feel, I see them here !

The shadows of dream land are flitting away,
Like clouds from the wind god's breath ;
I stand alone in the morning gray,
I have waited all night for death.
My locks are damp with the chilling dew,
And my eyes are dim with tears ;
Oh, God! may the homeless ones be few
In the rush of thy rolling years !

MY ISLAND HOME.

My Island Home! fond love for thee
Still trails along my memory—
The dim old notes resounding,
While freighted argosies of thought,
The heart's rich pearls with the past inwrought,
O'er the billowy swell are bounding,
With the hum of years
In the roll of time,
My childhood's tears,
My restless prime,
And the plaintive knell
Of the sad soul-bell,
From the wreck all my hopes surrounding.

The wild waves wash your rugged cliffs—
Cliffs of my native shore ;
The lashing tides against your breast
Their wrathful surges pour ;
Your huge gray tops the dank mists crown,
When reign the Fog King's band,
And a foaming crest veils Neptune's frown,
As he roars along the strand :
But the sunbeams creep,
And with victor sweep
Falls the dispelling ray,
And the shadowy hosts,
Like pallid ghosts,
Melt in an hour away.
Then smile the pretty blue-bells,
O'er all the rifted slopes,
Clinging, with graceful sweetness,
Types of innocent young hopes :
And all around is beauty,
And all above is light,
While far down in the deep sea's cave
Sings the pale water-sprite—
As that pensive "*Ula-lula*" floats,
The white gull stoops her wings,
And with a weird-like motion,
To the briny swell she swings ;
Poised—like a thing enchanted,
She rocks upon the wave,—
As that pensive "*Ula-lula*" floats
From out the deep sea's cave.

My Island Home, I love thee!
Thou loveliest 'mid them all,
That number as the YEAR'S DAYS
In old Time's record call;
So many are the Islands, that cluster in the bay,
And forever are encircled by the Ocean's dashing spray:
Ye are as fair crown jewels, in a glittering casket
pressed,
As the shining waters hold ye, in flashing beauty
dressed.
The hours of day are numbered,
As the cannon's booming roar,
With sonorous resonance,
Proclaims, from shore to shore,
The rosy light is fading
On rampart, wall and tower;
The drums are beating the "retreat."
With the roll of warlike power:
The bugle, from the Fortress,
Rings out a pealing strain,
And back, the eyried Eagle
Shrieks her pæan o'er the main.—
But hearken! with the echoes,
As they faint on sea and shore,
I hear a cadenced timing,
As of convent vespers, pour;
Comes it from yonder headland,
Where the gray cowl'd Friar stands,
In dim sepulchral grandeur—
Huge monarch of the sands?
Hark! to the chanted "ave"
Of the legendary Nuns,

“Ave sanctissima,” echoes whisper,
Pity the deserted ones ;
“Dulcis virgo, O purissima ;”
List, ah, list, their suppliant tones !
Thus ever, from the sunset hour,
Till swells the midnight chime,
Those sorrowing spirits murmur,
Aves of a summer clime :
And, blending with the quivering light
That pleading chant is heard,
With the murmur in the evening wind,
The boatman’s soul is stirred—
And he pauses on his dripping oar,
To list the phantom prayer,
As it ripples on the dark, wild sea,
Then sinks so stillly, there—
For an instant spirit-thrillings
Entrance his stern, dark brow,
As strike along the human chords,
The mystery of wo ;
But in pulseless, marble silence,
The gray Friar’s lips are bound,
We vainly question destiny,
The limitless profound :
But all around is beauty—
And all above is light,
While far down in the deep sea’s cave,
Sings the pale water-sprite—
As that pensive “*Ula-lula*” floats,
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TO —.

I would not in anger chide thee,
Though thy deeds have been my bane;
Though the deluge fierce hath swept me,
Filled my soul with hopeless pain :

Love's bright dream all rudely ended,
Wakened by a sable wing,
Shutting out the holy sunlight,
Folding the deep midnight in.

There I brooded in the darkness,
Till my scorching brain did swim,
And my heart swelled in the blackness
Till hope burst the surging brim !

Years have rolled since that sad parting,
And the dull gray thread of life—
Woven 'mid the fires of Etna,
Quenched oft by sorrow's strife—

Though its woof can ne'er be blended,
Still 'tis mingling with the chime
Of the vibrant chords that echo,
From the murmuring harp of time;

Music writ in burning letters,
Pleasures cadenced into pain—
Thou it was that forged the fetters—
Would that I could break the chain!

For the galling links of iron
Rust within the human heart,
And the soaring spirit's fettered
By the poison and the smart.

Yet there is one pulse still throbbing
With the old accustomed power ;
There's one chord I would not sever,
Though the world were pledged my dower :

'Tis the sweet parental cestus,
Binding in a mutual thrill
Buds of love our God did give us—
With our life their pulses rill.

They, the little tender nurslings,
Clustering at their mother's knee,
And, with faces full of wonder,
Ask, "Where can our father be?"

Yet, for their sake, I, in silence,
Hold my quivering heart that bleeds,
That I cannot, for example,
Point them to their father's deeds!

Thou hast thrown aside thy duty;
But a mother's heart is strong,
And to win life's fearful battle,
I will wrestle 'mid the throng;

Brave the tempest's clashing thunder—
With unflinching soul and eye,
To hope's broken plank still clinging—
Stem the tide, or 'neath it die!

INVOCATION.

Come, wreath thy spells of heaven-born might
Around my pallid brow;
Bid my eyes glow with prophet-light,
My soul fulfil her vow.

And though the storm impetuous beat
On my defenceless head,
I'll lure some phantom still to cheat
My soul from fear and dread.

I'll snatch one laurel from the wreath
On Genius' flushing brow ;
And, wafted by Ambition's breath,
I'll steer my shallop's prow.

O heaven-born Genius, wilt thou not
Touch with thy magic wing,
The throbbing heart and dreaming soul,
That tempts the Pierian spring ?

Fill me with glory's visions bright,
Give to me passion's fire ;
That I may strike with master-hand
The heart's deep ringing lyre !

THE PEARLY GATES.

I sit by my dim hearth, mother,
A watcher sad and lone,
And visions of the olden time
Come stealing through the gloom ;
I hear thy gentle voice, mother,
As it was wont to sound,
And the cadence sweet and tender trills
Through every nook around ;

I start and stretch my weary arms
To clasp thee once again,
Alas ! it was but fancy's dream
Haunting my wandering brain.

The dream was very sweet, mother,
The dear old memories come,
With many a light and tender gleam,
Calling the wanderer home.
The whispering trees in the grove, mother,
The song of the gurgling rill,
Are music heard and deeply felt
Within my sad soul still.

* * * * *

I know that thou wilt pray, mother,
When shadows grim and wild,
Are falling in the quiet room,
Where oft thou hast blest thy child—
And, oh ! the very words, mother,
Sound like a mournful wail,
Across the waste of memory,
“Dark with the serpent's trail.”
Thou prayed'st that evil days
Might pass thy darling by,
And hours in which no pleasure lived
Might never her come nigh.

Thy fervent prayer had power, mother ;
Oh ! it has been a spell,

I'll snatch one laurel from the wreath
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Oh ! it has been a spell,

When the world looked cold and drear,
In balmy dews it fell—
Soothing the tortured soul, mother,
And whispering, "Peace, be still,"
To all the deep and bitter founts
That swell the proud heart's rill;
The fevered pulse is stilled, mother,
And beams of heavenly light
Fall from the pearly gates
And soothe my aching sight.

QUESTIONS.

What is the wind that speaks to me,
With a sighing moan
And a changeful tone,
Thrilling my heart with its minstrelsy,
Till I cannot see for the tears that climb
To my mournful eyes while swells that chime?
For it brings me back my lost ones' sighs,
And the murmuring tones of sad "good byes."

And whence the sea with its famy crown,
Heaving and plunging up and down,
In measureless length
And limitless strength,

The dark waves roll,
From pole to pole,
With clamorous roars,
Sweeping the shores—
Where the ice-king holds his dismal court,
Where sleep and death are of one import,
Where the crackling and crashing of icebergs grim
Are the solemn “rouse” that is kept for him;
While the Northern Light, with its fitful glare,
Is the coronal on his snowy hair.
'Tis the self-same sea that disports again,
Like a lover fond, on the southern main,
Rippling up sands where the sparkling gold
Is kissed by the sun through its wavy fold.

And whence the live fire with its shooting flash,
Curling and leaping,
While the master is sleeping,
With its forked tongue for a scourging lash —
Thrusting its light
On the murky night,
Till the skies are aglow
With the fateful flow ;
And wild shrieks are ringing,
While brave hearts are bringing
Their blood to stifle the mortal foe.

And what the Earth with her shadows deep,
That lengthening fall,
Till they fold like a pall,
The mountain's foot, where the valley sleeps,

From what portal of light
Sprang the nebulous night
Which has grown a vast globe of beauty and might
Rushing down through space,
And the airs embrace
With a mocking sound
And a restless bound
Reeling on in her sphere-lighted race? ²¹
And her children creep to her ample breast,
And fearless of danger they take their rest;
Thence Spring steals forth with her sandals green,
And Summer is rich in her flowery sheen,
And Autumn gorgeously flutters by—
As a queen she has lived, as a queen she will die.
While Winter, like marble carved over the grave,
Stands colossal in gloom where the whirlwinds rave.

WE MEET NO MORE.

Thou dost not miss my step within thy Hall,
My voice within thy bower; thy home is full
Of beauty and of love, but thee I miss.
The garden path, where late thy foot hath trod,
Is sacred unto me as Paynim shrine
To the blind worshipper of India's faith:
I seek thy last faint footprint in the sand,
And muse for hours above the unconscious dust;

And musing thus, my thoughts go out to try
The reaches of the heart.—Why dwell I thus
Alone—apart from human sympathy?
Why trails yon rose-tree from its bursted bands
Along the ground? blooms it as brightly there?
Did weight of its own wealth of beauty loose
The slender thread that bound it in its pride
To that grim wall—found it no genial warmth,
Save that enkindled by the amorous sun,
Piercing the coldest stone with joyous light—
Perchance the loving leaped up there to thank
With dewy sweets that softly wooing ray,
Not scanning well the distance 'twixt them set—
Essayed in vain thro' intervening space—
And so fell back in impotent despair.
Thus all her blooming glories lay assoiled
In lowly earth? No answer comes from thee,
Thou who wast wont to be my Mentor, now
Art blessed with fairer love than I might bring.
The vine neglected hangs, a thriftless dower,
Adown my cottage eves—it lacks thy care
To husband all its purple wealth, as erst
Thou didst when timid love thy sway confessed,
Held both hands heaped to thee! Unconscious now
I pluck the fruit my lips refuse to taste—
Ah! blame not thou my murmuring strain, it will
Not rest this wayward heart of mine: the strings
Of my poor gittern are all wrecked—the last
Snapped yesterday; it seemed a living thing
To pine away its strength, and, one by one,
The cords shrank slack and tuneless, till they broke
'Neath my faint touch. Its music sweetly trilled

To my glad voice's chime in days of yore ;
All silent now the tender cadenced lay.
Some while do I forget, thou'rt gone for aye,
I strive to think thy absence one of those
Long weary hours myself had bid thee forth
For thy best good. Oh ! that sad time of poor,
Sweet wretchedness ! E'en that is lost to me :
I deemed not then that there would come a day
When I should call thee back, and thou not hear
My cry ; thou hast said tears are weak, and I
Forbear to let my eyelids sleep with dew ;
To help their weight—I dream—and in my dreams
I look into thine eyes, and sunny hopes
Are laughing in my soul ! *We meet no more—*
Is my first waking thought, then droops my head,
And the unbraided hair falls massy damp
About my pallid cheeks—for thee I wore
These raven tresses once in shining bands
Above my glowing brow, that flushed with love's
Own light when thou wert by to praise ; my hands,
Pale tremblers, fail to do their office more,
The unstrung gittern and the unpruned vine,
With this dark tangled tresses' sable shroud unfold
My deep despair—gray desolation stoops
On hurtling wing, breaking the deathlike hush,
And wakes my soul to life's full bitterness.

HELOISE,

A

DRAMA OF THE PASSIONS,

•

IN

FOUR ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

STANLEY CAMERON, an enthusiastic disciple of the old Magic Art.

WALTER CAMERON, his Cousin, supposed to have been lost at sea some four years previous to the opening of the Drama.

Col. RATHBORNE, friend to Stanley Cameron.

RALPH, Servant to Heloise Listar.

HELOISE LISTAR.

ESTHER.

Mrs. TENANT, the friend of Esther and of Heloise.

Mrs. GLOSSIN, a Lady in Society.

Nurse TALBOT, Servant to Esther.

LUCY, Miss Listar's Maid.

Ladies, Gentlemen, Attendants, etc., etc.

Scene in the City.

Fashionable Costumes of the Present Century.

HELOISE,

A DRAMA OF THE PASSIONS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A turret chamber.—A table on which are various astrological instruments, black lettered books, etc. —Before a gothic window a telescope.—At the other side of the room are appliances of a chemist's laboratory.—Stanley Cameron seated at the table; before him is a freshly drawn horoscope, which he compares with, and fills up according to figures and lines, from the books and observations scattered around.

STANLEY CAMERON *seated at table.*

STANLEY. To know so much, and yet to know no more!

These computations sorely puzzle me;
I read the stars and scan my House of Life
And startling combinations there I find:

Mars threatens, Venus smiles, but in conjunction
 Influences of portent, dark, and dire,
 Prophetic of some fearful fate to me;
 And when I strive the ruin-wrack to read,
 To clutch its meaning, peer into its face;
 The frowning foe to find, down comes the shade
 The confluence fades, like twilight rays, lost
 In the lap of night, and powerless I, to avert
 The storm that sullen broods, above my peace!
 This cheating fiend, that mocks me on the brink
 Of a great revelation—let me find!
 And hold him here, confronted with my fate:
 Yea, let me wrestle as did He of old—
 With some strong Angel, peradventure deal—
 And never let him go, till I attain
 The boon I seek, be it a good or ill!

(Knock at the door.)

Come in. *(Enter Rathborne.)* Ah, Rathborne; is it
 you, my friend?

RATHBORNE. Yes, Cameron; by all the stars, 'tis I!

STANLEY. I'm very glad to see you; how's the
 world?

RATHBORNE. Why all my world is well and how
 are yours!—

Those numberless bright realms in which you live,
 Scorning us lower men, keeping aloof—
 Dwelling in such a height, that we scarce meet
 On "Terra Firma," now, but tip-toe stand;
 Nay, almost forced to climb to find you out!
 Come down, do, from your pedestal, and be
Like flesh and blood; leave those old musty tomes,
And, please you, let us look at the fair face

A DRAMA OF THE PASSIONS.

Of some sweet deity, who has no wings
With which to elude our clasp, when we would !
Ah ! now I know your ailing, you have gazed at s
Till you are fairly moon-struck. No ?

STANLEY. You much mistake me, I am of
earth.

Too earthy ; if that please your rallying mood ;
I have been thinking of the pride of wealth.
How all its tendencies pervert the man ;
It claims of those it will endow, that they
Not only hold their heirships all untrenched ;
But sell their souls, and hearts, and minds to keep
Acres together—make the tenure firm.
Witness my wife and me, wedded for gold !
My uncles will create a wretched pair—
Our interests were so bound by that same will
That we could not refuse to live a lie
Except by the vast sacrifice of all
Which neither had the grand sublimity
To make, in face, of penury and want.
For you must know, that after ample means
Such abnegation would be something rare.
Each of us thought, we chose the lesser woe.
But, every day my confidence expires
In this ordeal of our too tried lives.
I in my studies some distraction find,
My wife is satisfied with other things ;
And, 'tis but rarely that we meet, or speak.
But I am weary of this silent war
Which brings such discontent ; uneasy dreams
Disturb my hours of rest and bitter doubts. —

(A knock at door ; enter an Attendant

ATTENDANT. Sir, Mrs. Cameron's compliment, to know

If you are ready to attend her now.

STANLEY. Say, I am ready in a moment more.

(Exit Attendant.)

I hope you'll join us, Rathborne, at this fête?

'Tis given in honor of my wife and me,

A sort of gala welcoming to town.

I dare say you know that, and all the rest;

What superfluity for me to tell

Where fashion hoists her flag; I live immured,

And cannot but believe what's news for me

Is also news for you :—'Tis but a step!

Go take my wife; and I will shortly come.

RATHBORNE. Oh, yes, I mean, to go; but by the bye, I have a shred of gossip for your ear.

There is a rustic belle appears to-night

To dazzle with her beauty all our eyes,

At least so rumor says and I believe;

And further still, she is the cherished ward,

Of those good folk, the Tenants, and she was

The adopted daughter of Madame Listar,

Who died some year ago, bequeathing all

Her fortune to this stranger maid. 'Tis said

That half mysterious whispers hint such tales

Connected with this charming "demoiselle."

That curiosity is all agog.

I will confess, that I'm not loath to meet

This petticoated wonder of the hour!

STANLEY. I'm with you of your humor; we will go—
Leave me but for a moment, and I come.

(Exit Rathborne.)

He little thinks, with what an eager eye
I have perused her features, as she stood
Within the vine clad balcony below;
The charming picture, framed in shining leaves,
Which the sun gilded with its purest ray !
I've felt while gazing on her, that our spheres
Have been commingled, and in some bright world
Beyond the spacious blue, which canopies
Our earth, where living forms of Ether float—
In the fair mazes of ecstatic bowers
We as one shining mote, perhaps have dwelt.
But drenched in Lethe's fountain have forgot
The fulness of that pre-existent dream—
Which oft returns, faint, with a troubled thought;
Murmurings of distant memories, which fling
Over the sombre now, a brilliant tinge
And perfumes eloquent of blissful hours !
Does she feel this ? It cannot but be so.
I go to prove the reminiscence true
And test Pre-Adamite convictions there !

(*Exit.*)

SCENE II.

A vestibule in Mrs. Tenant's House.

Enter HELOISE LISTAR, reading Tablets.

HELOISE. What a great thing it is to be the mode ;
I con the names upon my tablets here ;
Such names, as unsophisticated eyes
Might idly ponder to their merit blind
I dread to mingle with them. Nature sets

A subtle cross betwixt their blood and mine.
Were the tale known which burns into my heart
Its lines of fire—that I'm the child of shame—
And, yet, I feel, it is not, cannot be,
I never knew my sire; but, mother said,
And, she ne'er spoke untruth, that though she was
“Deserted, she was honorably wed”—
And, then, she died—and I was left alone,
A simple child, my fatherhood unknown,
And not one friend, in all the wide, wide world
To make me glad. The children in the streets
Saluted me with ignominious names,
And shouted “bastard” as I fled along.
I found my mother's grave, and laid me down,
Bewildered on the sod. Few passed, none saw;
And there so long I lay, a sort of trance
Fell over me; and as, if in a dream,
Some one approached. A lad, of princely mien;
O'er me he leaned, seeming to pity me;
Then took me in his arms so tenderly,
And carried me away. I felt a sense
Of rest; and consciousness retired, until
My young protector, in his haste, trod on
My sweeping hair, and then I shrieked, and woke.
He laid me gently on a silken couch
Within his stately home, and calling soft
His mother's name; a gentlewoman knelt
And touched my brow, and smoothed my rumpled
curls,
With a fair hand, as white as drifted snow.
They gave me food, and coaxed me back to life;
I wildly wept, because they were so kind,

And after that, my home was there, for years.
And he, my first protector, came to be
The hero of my thoughts and of my dreams.
But, life's illusions ever are too brief,
And shred by shred we see them torn away.
The bare facts of existence then we face
In lieu of all our beautiful ideals—go,
Scourging memory—haunt me thus no more !
There is no joy in this exciting round ;
These pleasure seekers are not what they seem.
It is the only ground where I can meet
This Esther, face to face : I long to show her
The poor despised wood-bird, whose wings she thought
To clip, soars to her heaven on pinions bright
As hers. Perchance with songs as full of joy—
Although she rifled me, of all my heart
Held dear : Alas, alas, what thoughts will crowd :
E'en in a scene like this : Music and dance,
And song, and merry jests ! They make me sad !
A sumptuous melancholy seems to fall
Like a thin veil betwixt me and their glee ;
But I must not forget the grateful dues
I owe to my kind friends. I'll join the throng.
(Exit.)

SCENE III.

Ball room, music, discovered finishing a dance.

ESTHER, MRS. GLOSSIN, COL. RATHBORNE, *coming down stage.*

Mrs. GLOSSIN. But who's her family and what's her name?

For my part I don't like these people sprung
 One knows not whence, nor how. I half believe
 Some of the tales we hear are true. I know
 She's very rich but, that can't serve in lieu
 Of family and name. She has no style!
 See her walk, and how awkwardly she dances!

RATHBORNE. Nay, Madam, there I can't agree with
 you;

I think her very stylish—and, the rest—
 Her dancing is the very soul of grace;
 'Tis poetry—religion—everything.

Mrs. GLOSSIN. Lord, I declare you're frantic like the
 rest!

I really don't see what it's all about!

(Retires up stage.)

ESTHER. I have not seen this paragon, as yet,
 Of whom you all rave in so many keys.

RATHBORNE. Take care, then, Madam, for she will
 contest

The palm of beauty with you fairly too,
 For she is nobly, grandly, beautiful—
 There is a mantling richness in the tint
 Of her bright cheek, and in her eyes a light
 That baffles speculation. For their flash
 Is so magnetic, that the gazer starts,
 Whene'er those starry orbs are bent on him,
 As if he reckoned up his conscience, there,
 To find some hidden crime, those innocent
 Young judges signalled forth, in pure surprise
 From dark, to light; yet, looking gently on,
Forgivingly—through the excess of virtue
In those delicate depths so calm, so sad, and mild.

If I mistake not, *here*, the lady comes
To answer for herself and prove me true.

Mrs. TENANT *advances toward ESTHER, leading HELOISE*
LISTAR.

Mrs. TENANT. Permit me to present my husband's
ward

To you, dear Mrs. Cameron, Miss Listar.

ESTHER *utters a half stifled shriek and exclaims.* Tryst
Albyn! *(Recovering, takes her hand.)* Miss
Listar! *(Addressing Mrs. Tenant.)* This
lady, and

Myself have met before. Leave her with me,

Dear Mrs. Tenant. *(Mrs. Tenant and Rathborne go up
stage.)* I am glad we've met—

*(To Heloise who does not respond, but gazes fixedly at
Esther.)* Do I mistake? can memory play me
false?

We have been strangers long, but now, I hope,
I find a friend, long lost but not forgot.

HELOISE. We often met, when I was a poor girl
And wore a name which 'twas disgrace to bear.

ESTHER. I am so happy to have found you thus!
You could have saved me many a bitter hour.
No matter now, this is no time or place

(Looking hurriedly around.)

To speak of past mishaps. To-morrow then—

HELOISE, *interrupting her.* Name not the Irrevocable
to me!

I have no wish to roll the stone away
From the sad grave where I have buried it.

ESTHER. Yet, we must speak together of that past.
Else many souls are wrecked—I am so worn.
And warped, with heavy cares that I must ask
Your pity of my sorrowful estate.

STANLEY CAMERON *advancing, takes Miss LISTAR's hand.*

STANLEY. Pardon the interruption, Miss Listar;
I needs must claim your promise for this dance!
Forgive me, Esther, I must part you now.

(Leads her off. Music. Dancing.)

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An apartment in Miss Listar's house.

Enter HELOISE followed by STANLEY CAMERON.

STANLEY. Ah, Miss Listar, Heloise! a moment stay,
Don't take offence at my unruly words:
Believe me—as the moon attracts the sea
So turns my soul to yours in a full tide!
But when I'm here language completely fails—
And what I would express, and what I do

STANLEY. I know you are my Fate ! I fear it not,
 But rather court the ministration dark,
 Contented to accept from such fair hands
 Imminent peril which you have foreseen.
 Pity me much—love me a little more !

HELOISE. You must be mad, else, you would never
 dare
 To run so wildly on. Pity you, yes,
 I do ; I pity all who go astray
 From God's revealed law, and build themselves
 Up idols in the face of Heaven's decree.
 You tell me that your lot is very sad—
 But you have ties that ought to comfort you.

STANLEY. The strongest plea you urge, no comfort
 brings.
 I am a husband only in the name ;
 Nay, listen still, for there it is ! There lies
 The poison of my peace. In my own home—
 Perchance upon the bosom of my wife !
 It seems sometimes as if the milk of sweet
 Humanity, must turn to venom in
 My rankling veins. I must reveal to you
 What I have never breathed to mortal else ;
 Something impels me, now, to tell it all :
 The torment of my soul—take up my burthen,
 Bear it to light and show the hidden wrong.
 There is that child, supposed to be the son
 Of Talbot, serving woman to my wife,
 A little more than servant ; less than friend ;
 A cheating mystery hangs round them both ;
Their story I misdoubt : The child is hers—
My wife's ! Think of it ! I am not its sire !

HELOISE. How dare you, Sir, unless you have full proof,
Commit so grave a charge to stranger ears ?
And, yet, again, Sir, why this tale to me ?

STANLEY. Because to you, only to you, I give
The secret up, as, to the virgin pure
We dare to tell what is not breathed to man !
I cannot bear the presence of that child.

HELOISE (*aside*). At last—the time for my revenge
has come !
And so, you cannot bear the gentle boy ?
To rid yourself were easy, it seems to me :
Now, I quite love the little fair-haired elf.
Of course, you are the Lord of your domain.
Order the boy away.—’Twill be a test
To put your doubt to proof.—Give me the child !
I love him well.—I’ll make him heir to all
That I possess. His mother is my care ;
I will on her confer such benefits
That she shall ne’er regret another home !

STANLEY. It shall be tried. I’ll make your offer
known.
Talbot will yield him up, if he be hers,
To such advantages. Is it then so ?
Will that child’s love be all your heart will crave ?
’Tis wise ! If you have nought of faith to give,
Don’t cheat a husband with a subterfuge !
You favor none ; you say all suitors, “Nay ;”
I know you are above these buzzing flies.
You will not mate, but where your heart is given—
Self reverence is great. You never have loved?

HELOISE. Why say you, I've no faith to give to man;
Or, that I ne'er have loved.—Why should you doubt
But that's the sacred secret of my life
To keep my virgin faith unsullied, pure—
Hoping to find my other self in Heaven?

STANLEY. I will not question why your bounding
youth
Thus shields itself, with such resistant power.
The wisdom of Minerva crowns your brow.
Trust me—promise to be my friend, and I
Will make forgetfulness of all the world
Beside, my shield of peace, and happiness.

HELOISE. No, not forgetfulness; I would not be
Your friend, to foster such a selfish creed.

STANLEY. Good bye. The child I'll send to you at
once.
You must thank me for that; and so, good bye!

(Exit Stanley.)

HELOISE. Oh, my lost spirit love, once more I'm
glad!
I shall possess thy soul in that pure type,
That living image of thyself long lost.
I have a right divine! Hold, beating heart;
Stay the soft tumult of impetuous throbs!
'Twill wring her heart to send her idol forth.
Revenge is cruel; but my rivals scorn—
How? Rival! No, that ended far away.
So, let it rest where his bleached bones are stirred,
Rocked by the undulations of the tide
Within a wave-washed tomb! Rival she was,
And the sharp barb is left; the sting remains -
A rankling venom in the wound it left.

No, no, I cannot, will not now forgive !
I'm not possessor of a grace so fine.
No mercy, none ! She robbed me of the flower
Of all my life. I steal the fruit it bore !

(*Exit.*)

SCENE II.

An apartment in Stanley Cameron's house.

ESTHER and Nurse TALBOT, *discovered.*

ESTHER. Oh, tell me, Talbot, how shall this be borne ?

NURSE. Dear mistress, it is very sad. What's done
Perhaps is but to try us. Let us then
Act wisely ; feign consent ; give up at once
The child to his caprice, and, though it grieve
Us sorely, still seem pleased with this great offer.
Dear Madam, trust in Heaven, and be resigned.

ESTHER. I gave my blessed babe to you to rear—
Left unexplained the sacred motherhood,
Although your faithfulness deserved the trust.
This day hear all the truth : I was the wife
Of Walter, Stanley's cousin ; but a month
Elapsed, ere he was called away, and in six more,
Came tidings terrible—that he was drowned—
The ship was wrecked upon a coral reef
And all had perished ! I was wild with grief ;
Scarce comprehended the emotions new
Crowding around my heart. 'Twas this young life—

The precious infant life—comforting me,
When ether life had faded to a dream !
I came to you : you know how well we kept
The secret of the birth of this dear child !

NURSE. But, tell me why the marriage was not then
Proclaimed before your husband went away ?

ESTHER. Oh, I implored him to conceal the act
From poor respect, obedience, what you will,
To aged parents tottering swiftly down
The steep declivity of failing life,
Whose hearts were bent on seeing me the bride
Of Stanley Cameron : May God forgive ;
I thought, when they were gone, and he returned,
We might declare ourselves before the world ;
His loss awoke me from my selfish dream
And made me rashly ready to obey
The wishes of those dear deceived ones.

NURSE. Why not divulge these facts to-day, and have
All wrongs made right about our gentle boy ?

ESTHER. I have no evidence to show, no proof,
Not one poor scrap of paper do I hold
As witness to my honor and his rights !
In the confusion of that nuptial morn
Much was forgot, which should have claimed our care.
My Walter, once away, I said, “ Now I
Possess myself of the certificate
As legal proof, in case of accident.”
I sought the place,—Heaven’s lightnings as in wrath
At a clandestine rite, unsanctioned by
Parental blessing,—had defeated me
As death had done. The church was stricken by
A thunderbolt. Its archives perished, and

The priest who did the ceremony bless,
An aged man, had died. For the first time,
The sense of fatal error struck across
My mind, and shook me with misgivings dire.
A gipsy girl, the only other witness
Beside the priest, who could have helped my case,
From then till only yesternight I ne'er
Could find; now, she appears, under the guise
Of this young lady who adopts my son!
She is my foe implacable and stern.
Ruthlessly dashes from my trembling hand
The last sad cup of comfort from the past!

NURSE. Tell all this to your husband; trust in him:
I think he should be proud to heir this boy.

ESTHER. I dare not, for his jealous soul would fire
With rage. He hated him that's gone; I know
He little cares for me. The league of wealth
He craved, our ill-assorted union gives.

(She weeps.)

NURSE. My lady dear, it is a grievous wrong!

ESTHER. But yet, one hope is left! Tryst Albyn
may

Relent! I'll go to her, and plead my cause,
Show her the sorrow of this mother heart,
And beg her to restore my peace of mind!
Nurse, lead the way: Go quickly, before this
Fond hope abandons me to cold distrust,
Leaving me wrecked upon a shoal of doubts.

(Exit together.)

SCENE III.

Miss Listar's boudoir.

HELOISE, *alone.* I scarce can trust my heart, it
wavers so

'Twixt mercy and revenge. A tender fool!
She scorned me, called me menial base-born, low?
I should be marble to all pity now.
They say, that suffering grows to goodness in
The human heart? It is a simple lie—
Device of saintly souls, which bear no gall.

(Enter Esther.)

ESTHER. Oh, full of sorrow, shame, and love I come
To claim of you the pity you can give.
You were a witness to the marriage act
Which bound me to the father of that boy.
Will you not say it? Save me from this woe!
You know too well the intervening griefs
Which one by one with misery's sharpest edge
Have lopped the tender sprays of hope from off
My branching joys. Oh, listen to my cry!
Save me, dear Tryst! And give me back my child!

HELOISE. You plead it well. Can you not recollect
A scene somewhat like this, when I to you
Was suppliant, almost for life—for that,
At least, which was my sun of life, my joy—
A heart I cherished and which cherished me,
Until you crossed my path, and made it night.
You were all powerful then to grant my prayer.

You bade me hold my peace, with harshest words
Whose sickening catalogue I'll not repeat;
You know it all too well. I suffered then—
I am no more than human, waiting not
The great Avenger, to repay my wrongs.

ESTHER. I do remember, Tryst, with shame I own;
Proud was I, hateful, bitterly unkind;
Stung by reproaches which your words implied,
That I was seeking to entrap a man
For whom I cared not, other than that pride
And vanity could little brook, that one
Like you, should hold his heart in tender thrall.
I loved him and I could not help my heart.
Could he help his? He wished me for his bride.—
We too were only human.

Love, which had grown for you was but a habit,
Or pity, which the generous heart bestows
Upon the unprotected. I deemed not
He had ever cared for you in sober earnest.
He was not fickle, surely, surely not!

HELOISE. He did not care for me, else he would not
Have hurt the heart which he before had won.
He said he loved, and, I, computing by
My own heart-beats, believed it truth for both.
His were the first and only words of love
I ever heard. They might to me have had
More meaning than he meant to give. My heart
Was very hungry, lacked, perhaps, that nice
Discrimination—which decides what this or that
Phrase clearly signifies: Enough for me—
I thought I knew. His love was all my world!
But, when you came, you fascinated him,

Usurped my rights by glamour, coquetry ;
Your cultivated grace, your city-bred
Attractions, flung a challenge in his eyes
With every look, in every word, and tone,
Slowly the change came on : I felt it all,
And wandered out in bitterness from what
I scarcely could endure ; yet fluttered near,
As does the moth to the consuming flame
Which kindles it to death ; oh, love ! oh, fire !
I learned to act my part so well that you
And Walter thought I had forgotten all.

ESTHER. We did, indeed, we deemed the past had
been
To you but one of girlhood's fleeting fancies.

HELOISE. Love made you meek, and you with gentle
voice
Engaged my help for the clandestine plot.
I heard those lips, which once had flattered me,
With tenderness, pronounce the vow to you !
The arrow pierced me with an unseen hurt ;
The wound bled inwardly, and stifled speech.
I knew that your right speedily must part
And with vindictive fosterings dwelt upon't.
But, when his duty called him from your side
Ere the first moon of love had waned in Heaven ;
When he was gone ; ah ! when I knew you suffered,
Wickedly glad I gloated on your pains.

ESTHER. Oh, Tryst, forbear, forbear to harrow me
With memories so sad, and yet so dear !

HELOISE. Oh, I'll not spare you ; never think I will !
At length the tidings came, after long months,
That he was dead ! I fled to the dim woods,

To the seclusion of the caverned rocks,
Shrieking for joy that you, as I, must bear
The life-long pang of widowhood. I came
To watch you, with the sables all crushed in,
About your heart, in which you dared not fold
Your form. In beggarly attire I dogged
Your steps, and found you had a joy undreamed
By me. I made acquaintance with the nurse,
And thus found means to ingratiate myself
With Walter's child. You dared not often come
For fear the world your seeming maidenhood
Might doubt : I gently pressed the budding germ
Of dawning intellect. The ductile mind
Yielded for me its sweet, its early fruit!
Talk of a mother's love ; 'twas feebly matched
By the all-giving passion of my soul!
Chance favoured me in everything. I found
A happy home ; dear Madam Listar took
Me up, adopted me ; and, when she died
She made me heiress of her great estates
And daughter of her name. Amply endowed,
None recognise "Tryst Albyn," poor and mean,
In the accomplished lady, Heloise Listar.

ESTHER. But, why, why seek to rob me of my child?

HELOISE. I felt it as an outrage to the dead
That you'd consent to marry any man.
I saw what stood to you for love was but
A shadow, vague, uncertain dim. *True love*
Is never thus. It lives, and grows, and glows.
Distance or time is naught ; it brightens still ;
For ever on, immaculate, it rolls
A train of fire, concentrate unto God.

You forfeited your child when you had not
 The courage to confront your accident;
 To take him up before the world, and say
 The honest truth : What though they disbelieved;
 That could not kill. You had your child, and he
 His mother's breast to nestle to in spite
 Of all the world, which soon would see the truth.

ESTHER. I feel I have been wrong, oh ! very wrong ;
 I have forsworn my own dear flesh and blood !
 But will not sorrow expiate the sin ;
 And heavenly justice wipe away the stain ?
 If there be in your heart one drop of pity,
 Restore me to my child, avouch my honor
 To my jealous lord ; oh, if you ever loved !
 If Walter's name was ever dear to you—

HELOISE. Hush, hush. There is a spell breathed in
 his name
 Which bids me pause before I tread your heart
 To ashes ! Pitying angels brood above
 And whisper of compassion Jesus' Love !

(Enter child ; Heloise clasps him in her arms.)

ESTHER, *stretching her arms toward him.* My child !
 My child ! my child ! Since I have dared
 To call thee by thy name, my lips refuse
 To utter aught beside those precious words !

HELOISE. I have as much a right to kisses soft
 From this sweet baby mouth, as you could have.
 Since you have never owned him to the world
 I've kept love's vigils by him while he slept,
 Have listened to his prattle, taught him sports,
 And when at length wearied with childish games
 The sleepy lids dropped o'er the loving eyes,

And the long lashes fringed the flushing cheeks,
And, 'twixt the rose-bud lips, the light breath came
As cradled happily within my arms
I doted on the cunning piece of work
Filling my mind with an ecstatic awe.

*(The child disengages itself from Heloise and twines
about its mother's neck.)*

Nature's imperious index points the truth
And might of nature's laws. I yield to her.
The child is yours; I must be desolate!
The dear domestic ties I ne'er shall know;
My womanhood is incomplete on earth;
And something tells me that my life is short.

ESTHER. Oh, speak not thus. See, see, we love you
both :

Accept it. We can never give enough!

(Tableau.)

HELOISE. Ah, well! 'Tis well! Your husband,
Esther dear,

Loves not our boy! We must protect him well!
Our hearts the double shield for his defence.
Ay, even with our lives we will defend—
Leave me, a little now; pass through the garden
To your home. I will meet you by and bye!

*(All three embrace. Exit Esther and child by the
garden door. Heloise watching them.)*

(Curtain.)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The turret chamber.

STANLEY CAMERON, *discovered.*

STANLEY. This chamber redolent of many dreams ;
Of hours of mystic research seems to be
This night a den, too narrow for my hope—
I long to expand in an aerial flight
To touch the planets where I live in thought,
To seek, to know, to find what sages long
Have sought—where matter ends and soul begins.
Why do we boast the sapience of the schools ?
Why seek to tear the veil from Isis face ?
Why strive for that which feeds not when 'tis clutched ?
For immortality the mortal pines
And recks not by what path it treads to reach
The Empyrian height.
The indispensable companionship
Of mind with mind for scientific ends
Leads me to attempt the subjugation of
This young girl's will to my behests. She is
Already subject to strange laws in her
Own being ; and I feel assured that with
A temperament like hers, I can work marvels.

Witness the experiments of "Cagliostro;"
The world was doubtful of his power. But he
Compelled the destinies! The Oracles
Revealed to him the secrets hidden in
The womb of Time, born of a Virgin's pains; .
I would not she should suffer; yet must I
Employ her, as art's instrument, to woo
From mazy labyrinths, the fateful gnomes :
We will tread swiftly on; and straightway stand
In the assembled conclave of the gods,
Demanding that, which man may claim,
If courage fail not in the great ordeal !
'Twas only by deception that I won
Her careful ear : An emissary found
Just fitted for the work : A mother young,
A famished babe upon her breast; in hand
Another child so strengthless and so pale—
The maiden in her twilight walk stood still :
Kindly she questioned where the mother dwelt,
She pointing to the river, said—"Tis there—
And, oh! for love of Heaven quickly come—
My child may die 'ere we can reach the house ;
She came—they entered—in a lonely room
The woman left her—closed the door—and sought
For her reward ; well, little did I think
My old den on the river 'ere would be
The bower of beauty, and my haven of hope !
'Tis eight o'clock—my proselyte secure ;
A new excitement waits my ardent mind—
Imprisoned flesh—must not the spirit bind.

(Exit.)

SCENE II.

In a curious old wainscotted room scantily furnished, Heloise is discovered vainly endeavoring to gain egress by door or window; then throwing herself wearily into a chair, she seems absorbed in a state of confused wonder.

HELOISE. Am I a prisoner? Can it be; or is't
Some fearful dream? By whose design am I
Thus helplessly immured. Can poverty
Make villany so rank? That woman, she—
Could she be bribed to ruin me. 'Tis strange.

*(She buries her face in her hands. The door opens.
Enter Stanley. Heloise starts up.)*

HELOISE. Is it by your device, Sir, that I'm here?

STANLEY. I swear I mean you not the slightest harm;
But you must tarry here a little while,
Unless you promise that you will accord—
Unquestioned my design, my aim, my end,
No curious snatches at a purport dim
E'en to myself, as yet. I ask of you
Quiescence, yielding trust, to my command.
Some great good may accrue; but you must sleep!

HELOISE. What do you mean? Your looks affright
my soul—

*(Stanley approaches her making the magnetic passes,
and touches her forehead with a crystal.)*

STANLEY. And, now, to test the Odic forces—so—
Sleep! Maiden sleep! Let soul and body part,
And, thy pure spirit seek for me the realms

Of more than mortal knowledge : By such means
Both thou, and I, the delectation of
Supernal feasts shall taste, in endless bliss—

HELOISE, *dreamily*. By what strange power do you
coerce my will

To your behest ? I slide out from myself—
My body seems only the hollow trump
Through which sublimely rolls the cadenced voice !
The voluminous soul—the breath of God—
Swells, and expands, and pants, to meteor heights ;
Oh, save me ! or, I see the infinite
And perish in the insufferable light !
There is relief—I' scape—Where am I now ?

(*Her eyes are open but fixed. She moves uneasily.*)

STANLEY. She searches with instinctive hands the
air,

The subtly peopled air, where she will find
Perhaps!—How easily the spell was wrought ;
This argues well. I next must test how far
I hold her innermost ; for it may be
That though the crust of matter is subdued
The interior quality, that part of mind
Which appertains to the first cause, may yet
Resist me—Maiden, wilt thou come with me ?

HELOISE. No, no ; leave me with him ! I'm happier so :

Thought, will, soul, sense, all ebb beyond control !
I cannot own you for my master ; you—
You are so very dark.—So many things
Of hideous import, steal along the space
Which you invade. Oh, do not torture me.
I'll never do your bidding ! never, no !

Release me from this thralldom, fearful man,
Undo the spell; or, it will work you harm;
Your heart is pregnant with an evil thought
To murder sleeping innocence! Take care!
You do not know yourself or me! This me—
Will thwart, oh, dread necessity! your will!

STANLEY. She is beyond my power, and that dark
hint,

Did such a thought obtrude? And, if it did—
Can mortal man control his straying thought?

HELOISE. That drug! It sends a shudder through
my veins

A single drop makes everlasting blank
Upon the page of life; touch but the lips
With this death-dealing drug; and, lo! the fire—
The vital spark, is quenched—an icy clod—
A frozen witness, left! Mysterious crime—
Baffling the wisest chymist to detect.

STANLEY. 'Tis as she says. In yonder escritoire
The poison lies. But, she must not escape—
I have a double need to keep her close.
Insensibility is coming on.
I am not able to control her state;
She is like marble now, rigid and cold;
'Tis dangerous—quickly must I away—
My presence is obnoxious to her life.

(Exit Stanley.)

(As the key grates in the lock, Heloise recovers motion; rises from the chair, advances swiftly to the escritoire; takes from thence a small parcel; secures it in her bosom, then stealthily approaches

the dark corner of the chamber, kneels, and raises a trap door. The river is heard rushing beneath. She disappears through the opening.)

(Scene changes.)

SCENE III.

Apartment in Stanley Cameron's house.

Enter a GENTLEMAN ushered by an ATTENDANT.

GENTLEMAN, *speaking*. Say, to the lady who is mistress here.

(Esther appears. Right.)

Ah! this is she. *(To Attendant.)* Leave me, I will myself

Make known my errand. *(Attendant bows and exit. Left.)* Hold, my trembling soul!

My bride, my fair sweet Esther! Oh, my life—
Do you not recognise your husband?

ESTHER. Do spirits of the dead appear on earth?
Ah, 'tis too false; or, else, it is too true!
O, Walter Cameron! is it—is it—thou?

(She swoons. He supports her.)

WALTER. She swoons with joy at sight of me! The tale

Is false, that she is wedded to another—
Awake, my own! Thus let me press thee back
To hope, to love, to memory of me.

(Embraces her.)

Look up my sweet! Thy long lost husband speaks,

ESTHER, *recovering*. Ah, do not say those words,
again! Walter!

I'm lost—to you—to all—forever more!

WALTER. The blow that fells a grand colossal hope,
Is struck—and, here, the shivered atoms lie.
Each particle a separate soul—that writhes
Beneath the truth! Then I was told aright?

ESTHER. Oh, very clear the tidings seemed 'ere I
Believed report. I wept, and hoped, and feared;
Fears, grew at last to certainties, and I—
Was sorely pressed to keep my father's word—
I thought you dead—I am married—to your cousin!

WALTER. I know why the account seemed so like
truth;

But more of that anon! Yet, all these years
I only dreamed of you—star of my hope,
You were my very heart-strings as they beat;
I thought and lived for you, and from the strength
Of manhood drew assurance glad, that I
Should yet be free, to claim my angel wife!
I 'scaped a tyrant's chains and sailed across
A stormy sea—perils encountered, that
Would freeze your blood to hear, to find myself
Soul-wrecked, indeed, upon my native strand.

ESTHER. Oh, do not wring my breaking heart with
these

Reflections, sad, unmitigated truths!

(*Aside.*) I dare not tell him, that he has a child,
'Twould add a double pang to his sharp grief.
Oh, God! how terrible to bear this pain!

WALTER. 'Tis terrible, indeed. It seems to me
That all the bliss of all eternal worlds

Could ne'er repay the crushing agony
Endured within this little grain of Time!
Is there no way for rescue, or escape?

ESTHER. I see none now, but patient resignation
To a hapless doom, no human hand can change.

WALTER. My Esther, are you happy in your home?

ESTHER. Alas, I've known few happy hours since
The eventful morn that parted us for ever.

WALTER. The man who claims your duty—is he
kind

And tender to his lovely mate! Speak quick!
I cannot bear one hesitating doubt—
You weep. Ah, tell me all; confide in me.

ESTHER. I dare not—must not longer speak with
you—

Stanley is jealous of me, doubts my truth;
I pray you, do not let him know you have
Returned: for, if you do, my life may be
The sudden forfeit to my husband's rage!

WALTER. Your husband! My poor Esther, what
you ask

Is hard to grant; 'though banishment to me—
Whose one hope lies deep buried in a gulf
Of everlasting death, can't matter much!
I will not promise to avoid the man!

ESTHER. I do implore you, spare him—spare us all—
I ask it—for the worst is yet to come.

WALTER. The worst: what can you mean! What
can be worse?

Dear, tremble not. I will not let one breath
Of danger light on thy beloved head.
By our brief morn of love I promise thee.

ESTHER. And you must leave me now, should
Stanley come—

WALTER. Esther! my wife! I cannot give you up;
I'll call you still, my own, and fight my way
Straight through the heart of Fate—to hold you mine
In face of all the world, my claim is first.
Who dares to tell me, no? Forgive me—dear—
There is bewilderment about my brain
Which counsels madly.—Fare you well awhile!

(Exit Walter. Esther wildly following.)

SCENE IV.

Stanley's chamber.

He lies asleep on a low couch. The curtain of the window is put aside, and, enter Heloise, pale with dishevelled hair; she approaches the couch, and from a phial drops on the sleeper's lips the liquid poison.

HELOISE. He sleeps—he will not wake!—still on his
lips
Linger the rosy hues of life.—No more
Those eyes shall search the mysteries of Heaven—
No more that mouth shall smile—with sparkling wit
'Mid Bacchanalian songs—and fumes of wine!
Death clogs his curdling blood. His heart is still!
(Pause.)
The work is consummate I came to do.
(Shivering.) 'Tis very cold! Why do I linger on

Conspirator with that abjectest fear—
 That solitary dread of all who breathe?
 My awful partner, here, I dare not leave
 With the uncrowned mystery which wore
 The favor of Divinity—from whom
 My feeble hand has in a moment snatched
 The sceptred power—and given the princely form
 For the gross worm, to feed upon in gloom,
 When flickering flames gleam thro' the darkling tomb
 And light it to the banquet of Decay!

(Shuddering she advances to the window, and pauses.)

Thou matchless horror of Hadean shades!
 I leave thee there, accountant for the soul
 That dwelt within yon tenement of clay!

(Exit.)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

HELOISE, in her chamber, rising from her couch as if just awakened from sleep.

HELOISE. I have been harassed with such dreams,
 all night;
 And such a sense of weariness this morn—

But what is this? I have not been at rest—
My hair is dripping with the heavy dews—
My garments are all soiled, and torn, drenched,
And ah! my soul, what flashing thought is this
That cleaves like lightning through my wakening
mind?

Have I been dreaming—or have I in sleep,
Acted this fearful thing I seem to know?
Oh, awful recollections—swarming here.

(Clasps her brain.)

Inform me that it was no dream. Ah, fatal truth!

(Falls.)

Enter LUCY.

LUCY. My dear young lady, you have then returned?

Dear heart how terrified I was when you
Were nowhere to be found; but, as you said,
If such a thing occurred, I should not tell
A soul, I did not. But you came not home
After you went to walk in your own grounds
Lo! What could happen to you? Pale, cold, wet,
Shaking with ague? Ah, what luckless chance
Reduces you to such extremity?

HELOISE, *excitedly*. Who's in the other room?

LUCY. 'Tis Ralph, dear Miss.

HELOISE. Bid him come here; I wish a message done.

(Lucy beckons. Enter Ralph looking wild and disordered.)

What is the matter, man; what has gone wrong with you?

RALPH. There's something dreadful happened,
Miss, next door.

HELOISE. Speak out your news. What has befallen
there ?

RALPH. This morning Mr. Cameron was found
Dead in his chamber—and the wonder's great—
No marks of violence, or any sign
Furnish the slightest clue of how or why :
A man prowling suspiciously about
The place is taken into custody ;
It is affirmed he is a relative,
Long alien to his native land. It seems
Some ancient feud, the cause of much bad blood,
Existed. Circumstantial evidence
Is strong against the man. Rumor is rife—

HELOISE. Stop. I can hear no more. It is enough !
Leave me, good Ralph, and Lucy ; I would think
This dreadful matter over by myself.

(Exit Ralph and Lucy.)

HELOISE *takes from her bosom the phial, gazing wildly
upon it.*

Oh, faithful drug. How bravely dost thou kill !
Terrible avenger—what hast thou done ?
How darest thou unloose the silver chord ?
Could Heaven find no other minister
To wreak its wrath than me ? Unhappy wretch !
Puppet of Nature's pranks—remorseless deed—
Helpless conditioned ! Where all other souls
Are stayed by heavenly guides—I, left forlorn—
To do a work of death ! I am accursed !

(She rushes out.)

SCENE II.

A street.

Enter RATHBORNE, conversing with a CITIZEN.

RATHBORNE. We have been friends together many
years,
Travelled together over half the globe ;
I always feared his abstruse studies would bring
Him to grief. He ran the wildest hazards for his
art ;
Dealt with the strangest people to supply
His various demands. 'Tis evident
Whoever has the crime committed, did
It not for gain. It looks most like revenge.

CITIZEN. That is almost a certainty. 'Tis he,
No doubt, whom current rumor does assert
Connected with the most malignant facts ;
And it appears that he, and he alone,
Is benefited by his cousin's death.

RATHBORNE. Not benefited much, it seems, un-
less
This trial for his life you name as such ?
I'd stake my life upon his innocence.
I don't believe a single guilty thought
Was ever harbored in his noble mind ;
And feel assured that to exculpate him
Some evidence will yet appear ! If not,

If, by these circumstances he's condemned,
It will be wrongfully. Whoever may
The author be of this atrocious crime,
The guilty one is not young Cameron.

CITIZEN. But, my dear Sir, the question in the
court
Is strongly answered by this man's advent
Just at this juncture here. His conduct strange,
His language overheard, last night, in threats
To Cameron's wife—and justice even
Hints at her apprehension, on the charge
Of some connivance with the dread intent.

RATHBORNE. Oh, Justice ought to hang for some of
her own blunders.
Let us to the court, and see
This case go on. (*Exit Citizen.*) Poor Stanley! Sad
to think,

But a few hours ago, he walked these streets
As well as I, as full of strength and health ;
And, now, he lies, senseless, and stark, and dead !
I cannot comprehend the change. Feeling
Unmans me. I am not superstitious ;
But Stanley saw prefigured his own doom.
How oft he spoke of an oppressive sense,
Which seemed to weigh him to the grave, he said !
Now, he knows what mightiest and simplest
Know alike. The meaning of hereafter !

(*Exit.*)

SCENE III.

A court of justice. Present, Barristers, Witnesses, etc., etc.

WALTER CAMERON *in custody.*

A lady, veiled, stands in the witness box.

The scene opens at the moment when the Chief Justice, having examined the lady's statement, taken down in full, questions her.

JUSTICE. You say you can produce in court, and now
The person whom your statement proves to be
The wretched perpetrator of this act?

(The witness bows.)

Speak, then, that innocence be not impeached!

WITNESS. I am the criminal. *(Throws off veil.)* I am

Tryst Albyn, known

By another name to many of you here!

Several Voices exclaim. The beautiful Miss Heloise
Listar.

WALTER, *excitedly.* I knew her well under that
other name;

I'm overwhelmed with wonder, and with awe!

HELOISE. And you may well be so. Not more
than I?

Yes, with involuntary infamy

I'm linked and bound. From early infancy

To girlhood's prime, a creature dowered with

A double life—two separate states—unmixed—

For which am I accountable to-day?

I sleep, and wake; I seem to die, yet live—

And in this state strange things are done by me,

Which makes this weird infirmity a question

For students of psychology to solve.
Enough to say. It bars me from my kind!
Through all my early years of orphanage
Shelter and food I found, as I have said,
With Mr. Walter Cameron's mother, till
A wandering fancy dragged me forth to seek—
I scarce can tell—what thing it was I sought!
I found a woman noble, great, and good;
Who made me as a daughter of her house;
Bestowed on me position, wealth, and love—
More prized than all by the disconsolate.
Alas, no place can earth afford me more!
I am a curse, a danger to myself.
My dual life has always harmless been
Until, one, bound to new philosophies,
With blinded sense raised up a fearful power
Which fell and crushed him in his darkened path—
But, never can be laid, till all is dark.
Here, here (*clasping forehead*), where throbs emotion—
thought and sense—
Such thoughts make words like shafts of ice, hiss
through
The molten fires within the flaming soul!
And all, a whim, to prove a Theory!
And I, the victim of this maniac scheme.
Some spirits are too soft and ductile—apt
To take impression from the hostile "Djinns,"
Outside the threshold of humanity—
At slightest signal ready to advance
Their gnome-like presence to the mortal sphere!
Invite them not—call not the Demons from
Their gloomy lairs! The intellect may prompt

The strange companionship, intensely crave—
We can't assimilate with the unseen—
For their conditions, stranger, still, to ours,
Are harmful to the soul. Delusions mock—
And more we hunger, ever unappeased.
Trust not the fancy, when it points, beyond
The finite span! Our heavenly Father's love
Has gently stretched his hand to curtain off
The overpowering light from our weak sense.
Leave the inscrutable. Lift not the veil
Which God, for our Salvation, has let fall!
And, so, I leave you charges to be kept.
I from among you soon shall pass away;
For, I am weak, and I have suffered much—
As one, born outside of the Eden of
Conventions must. 'Tis nearly finished, now—
I feel the grasp of earth is loosening from
My soul—and recognize our Father's love—
But, yester morn, I might have said, " 'Tis hard
To live no more!" now, I accept a boon
From Heaven! The setting of my sun—is nigh—
The threads of life—break short—like leaden wires—
My feeble senses fail—the spirit sees—
I gaze on the eternal shores— Alone!
No, not alone! My mother's spirit comes!—
How beautiful the day breaks in across
The shining sea—that wafts me gently o'er—
I reach—at last my father's house—where all
May find a home, sheltered by holy love!

(Dies.)



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